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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/931,373	08/17/2001	Craig Andrew Weldon	051481-5065	1599

9629 7590 11/22/2002

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EXAMINER

HEPPERLE, STEPHEN M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3753

DATE MAILED: 11/22/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

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<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No. 09/931,373	Applicant(s) WELDON ET AL.	
	Examiner Stephen M. Hepperle	Art Unit 3753	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 18 March 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
     Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.  
     If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120**

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
     a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).  
     a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                                  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____  |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                         | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) <u>5</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other:  |

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Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 2 recites a dependency from a higher numbered claim, which is not permissible. It is unclear from which claim claim 2 is intended to depend, but in order to treat it somehow, it will be assumed "18" should be "1".

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-10 and 13-18, and 22-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Yamazaki et al. Yamazaki shows a vapor control valve between a fuel tank and a gas tank, with two chambers that can be connected by pressure against diaphragm 8. The diaphragm includes a convoluted intermediate portion and separates the lower chamber from an upper spring chamber.

Claims 1-10, 13-18, and 22-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Satoh et al. Satoh shows a similar device where the lower valve 106 divides the valve into three chambers. The diaphragm is convoluted, the chamber above the spring is vented with an orifice 90. Note check valve 102.

Claims 4-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bostedo. Bostedo shows a valve similar to the other valves. The diaphragm is thicker in the middle, and a check valve to bypass the valve.

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Claims 4-18 and 20-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bostedo. Bostedo shows a similar valve. Note the thickened diaphragm and a filter-orifice 66 (Figs. 1-2) connected to the spring chamber 32.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamazaki et al. or Satoh et al. It would have been obvious to make the diaphragm of Yamazaki or Satoh out of materials impermeable to hydrocarbons as a matter of ordinary design. To do otherwise would be plainly irresponsible.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Stephen M. Hepperle whose telephone number is 703-308-1051. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday.


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Buiz can be reached on 703-308-0871. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-308-7765 for regular communications and 703-308-7765 for After Final communications.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0861.

  
Stephen M. Hepperle  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3753

SMH  
November 19, 2002